The first thing you spoke about was repairs to the bathing ghats and you want some wells deepened. These are matters purely for the Municipality to look into as I said last year.

Then you spoke something about parapet walls. Well, I did not quite follow you. If you will write to the Chief Engineer or tell him what you want, he will initiate action on the subject.

Then you said something about the transfer of *poramboke* lands and trees within the Municipality to the Municipal Council. I think you dealt with the same question last year. I would invite you to read the reply I gave last year and the reply which Mr. Raghaviah previously gave on that point.

Then you come to toddy shop No. 17. The Excise Commissioner tells me that he goes there on an average once a month, and nobody has ever complained about it. Perhaps you stored it all up for the Assembly. If it is brought to the notice of the Excise Commissioner, he will see what can be done so that all communities, including bus-drivers, may escape the evil of these toddy shops.

Your next item is the opening of an English School for girls. You know what the Government's policy is—not to go on opening new schools, especially English Schools. But if the Municipal Council or other private body applies to the Director of Public Instruction for permission to open a private school, I have not the slightest doubt that he will consider it sympathetically.

Then you speak about the revision of town limits. The Municipal President has appointed a sub-committee to go into the question and after they report to the Council he will write to Government. This report is awaited by the Government.

133. Some Municipal problems and needs of the Trivandrum town.

MR. R. SANKARANARAYANA AIYAR (*Member, Municipal Council, Trivandrum*) spoke about the defects in the Municipal Regulation. Firstly, the Regulation made no distinction between small towns and big towns. According to the member, municipal towns might be divided into three classes, *viz.*, the capital of the State, the major towns and the minor towns. The capital city stood on a different footing from the others. In some municipal towns, country parts, which derived no benefits from municipal activities, were included. The Municipal Regulation should not be applied to those parts. A separate Regulation applicable to the Trivandrum town should be passed on the model of the Madras City Municipal Act and the other municipalities should be divided into two classes, major and minor.

Under Section 47 of the Municipal Regulation, the Municipal Councils had to pay for the land acquired for their use but the Councils could not appear and adduce evidence in respect of the land acquisition cases, before the Land Acquisition Officer as in British India. In Travancore all land acquisition proceedings were conducted by the Government officers and Municipal Councils were not allowed to do anything in the course of such proceedings. The defect should be removed and the Municipal Councils should be given the right to refer to the District Courts any award with which they were dissatisfied.

For the proper governance of a town, careful attention should be paid to regulate the storage and supply of articles of food and drink to prevent their becoming unwholesome. The Municipal Regulation did not reproduce even the salutary provisions of the Penal Code on the subject although a penalty was imposed on persons selling food or drink, not of the genuine substance or quality of the article demanded by the purchaser. Many fell diseases were transmitted through such adulterated and unwholesome articles. The malpractices of persons engaged in the sale of milk and buttermilk were becoming scandalous. The articles obtainable in towns served only to introduce many varieties of dangerous bacilli in the human system. The old Town Conservancy and Improvement Regulation contained the necessary safeguards. The omission to embody similar provisions in the Municipal Regulation should be supplied, with reference to the provisions in the Madras City Municipal Act on the subject.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Under the Municipal Regulation, the proprietor of a dramatic troupe and a circus or a cinema company who conducted a performance without a license or failed to comply with the stipulated provisions in the license could only be prosecuted. If he went out of Travancore before the prosecution proceedings were completed, the Municipal Regulation was of no avail. In order to stop then and there any performance which might be deemed by the President of the Council to be indecent or obnoxious, necessary provisions should be made in the Regulation. The member requested that, in view to propose the necessary amendments to the Regulation, a committee consisting of persons with municipal experience be appointed.

There were nineteen municipalities in the State but no common agency to co-ordinate their work. One municipality did not know what the others were doing. The representatives of the several municipalities should often meet and discuss problems of general importance with persons experienced in the working of the Municipal bodies and other representative institutions and help the councils and the Government with expert advice on municipal administration. It would also be desirable to have municipal accounts checked oftener. Under the existing arrangement, it was the Secretariat, in which there were no persons skilled in the work of popular institutions, that checked the budget estimates submitted by the councils and solved problems of common importance. That was not satisfactory. During the days of the old Town Improvement Committees, conferences of representatives of the several committees were held with the Head of the Administration as chairman. A similar conference was also held during the first year of the working of the Municipal Regulation. The conferences should be revived. An officer not below the rank of a Dewan Peishkar should also be appointed on the model of the Inspector of Municipalities in the Madras Presidency to guide and help the councils and the Government with expert advice. The new officer might also be saddled with the work of controlling the several *panchayats* to be created under the Village Panchayat Regulation as well as with the work of supervising the Village Panchayat and Bench Magistrates' Courts in the State.

The number of municipalities in the State was increasing and municipal problems were becoming more and more intricate and difficult. Hence it was essential that the municipalities should be represented on the Legislative Council where at least one seat should be reserved for them. A separate constituency for municipalities was provided under the old Legislative Council Regulation, I of 1095.

The control over the several roads, drains, culverts, etc., in the Trivandrum town should be transferred from the Public Works Department to the Municipal Council. Under the existing arrangement, the Council had to write to the Government and the Department for the repair of roads, drains, etc. The streets were not at all provided with proper drains and there was no co-ordinated system of drainage in town nor were there any proper connections with outlet channels. Although a resolution was passed for the transfer of all minor roads and drains to the Municipal Council, no final decision in the matter had been reached. As a first step in the direction, the member prayed for the transfer of all drains, culverts and minor roads in the town to the control of the council together with the funds allotted for expenditure in respect of them as in the case of kerosene lights in the town.

The question of widening the roads in the town had been brought to the notice of the Government on several occasions. Some of the important roads were very narrow, especially at certain bends. With the increase in motor traffic, collisions of cars were becoming very common. As instances in point, the member referred to the curves near the gas tank and the Zenana Mission bungalow on the road leading from the Science College to the Altaramudu in Vazhutakad. The following roads also required immediate widening :—

(1) The road from the Science College to Altaramudu.

(2) The Kochar road between the Pazhvangadi and Killiyar junctions and the Tampanur road.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

The first mentioned road was mostly frequented by boys and girls attending the three important educational institutions in the town. The second road, if widened, would relieve the congestion in the Chalai bazaar road. The widening was possible by covering up the Kochar and taking the water through an underground pipe. The proposed work was necessary also from a sanitary point of view, as the water in the Kochar was polluted by the dwellers near its banks. An additional 3 feet width of land on the northern side of the road might be acquired if necessary. The congestion in the Chalai bazaar road would also be relieved by opening a parallel road 50 feet wide from the Pazhavangadi *Pullayarkovil* to Aryasalai. The land acquisition charges would not be heavy. The widening of the Tampanur road would serve to divert the heavy traffic on the Main road. The above works should be taken up early, as acquisition of lands in future years would be more and more costly.

The supply of pure water in the town was of urgent necessity. Many of the diseases prevalent in the town such as elephantiasis, rheumatism, and typhoid fever, were due to the supply of impure water. The former Dewan said, in 1920, that, when the supply of wholesome water became an accomplished fact, many of the diseases would disappear. Although a big scheme like the water supply scheme in Trivandrum could not be brought into effect at once, the same might be expedited. The Municipal Council would be prepared to impose a water cess and repay the capital spent on the scheme. After the loan was repaid, the water-works might be transferred to the Municipal Council as in Calcutta and Bombay. Being a costly scheme, the Municipal Council was not able to take the initiative.

The last point touched upon by the member was about the need for a non-official President to the Trivandrum Municipal Council. The subject had been brought to the notice of the Government on several occasions, but with no avail. Even the Legislative Council had a non-official Deputy President. When the question was first brought forward, the Government met it by saying that, as a condition precedent, an Executive Officer of the status of a Dewan Peishkar should be appointed. But when that suggestion was accepted by the Council, the Government said that the Municipal Regulation required to be amended and that it would be expedited. The member requested that the question be taken up without further delay. He said that many of the drawbacks in the working of the Trivandrum Municipal Council would disappear with the advent of a non-official President.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Sankaranarayana Aiyar, nearly two years have gone by since I became Dewan. Since then I have learnt a lot about Travancore municipalities, and this municipality in particular, which has added to my store of knowledge of municipalities in various parts of India. I am not going to let you into the precious secret of the conclusions I have formed on that knowledge. You tell me—I will begin with the end of your speech—you ask me why I have not given you a non-official President. You tell me that the matter was considered and half-promises were held out some years ago. To tell you the truth, I have not studied the full history of this proposal. For I have had my time preoccupied with things which, in my humble opinion, are more important than whether the President of a municipality should be an official or a non-official. Some day when I have leisure, I will study the literature on the subject and post myself up in the *pros* and *cons* of official and non-official presidents.

Then you want an Inspector of Municipalities who should also be an Inspector of Village Panchayats.

MEMBER: As well as Village Panchayat Courts and Bench Magistrates' Courts.

DEWAN: I do not know how an Inspector can inspect judicial institutions. That passes my understanding.

MEMBER: That exists in British India.

DEWAN: I do not know the present conditions as regards *panchayats* in British India. As for village *panchayats*, I am not sure whether villages or *panchayats* exist here.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

MEMBER: They are to be created by the new Regulation.

DEWAN: Then you want an Inspector to give expert advice to Government. I do not know where to find such an Inspector.

MEMBER: An Inspector of Municipalities.

DEWAN: I have yet to discover in what way he will advise the Government.

Then you very cordially and kindly invite me to preside over the deliberation of a congregation of municipal representatives from all over the State. I appreciate the compliment, but I must decline the honour.

Then you ask for a seat in the Legislative Council for a representative of the municipalities. As for as I am aware there are many people who are municipal members who have assumed seats of honour and dignity both in the Legislative Council and in this Assembly.

MEMBER: They do not represent the municipalities in the Council.

DEWAN: What does the name matter ? The fact is the real thing.

Then we come to more important things ; transfer of roads, drains, etc., to the municipality. Therein also your suggestion leads up to divided authority and separate responsibility. At present at any rate until such time as your municipality has larger funds at its disposal you cannot have these roads. There is also difficulty about the transfer of drains. But in this matter, I have not the slightest doubt that the Public Works Department will co-operate with you in the matter of your suggestion that a committee of drainage experts should be asked to assist you in regard to the drainage of Trivandrum town.

There is the small matter of the transfer of lighting. Perhaps you will agree with me that we may stay our hands because I hope to have electric lights here in 18 months' time or so.

In regard to the widening of the Kochar, I will have the Chief Engineer examine all those three proposals of yours.

But in regard to the widening of certain roads and easing of particular angular points here, I am completely in agreement with you.

MEMBER: We have sent you several resolutions on this.

DEWAN: The widening is very useful to ensure the safety of the people. You mentioned three ; I can count half-a-dozen. I do not want to die a sudden death. I will ask the Chief Engineer to look into the question.

In regard to water supply in Trivandrum, I have already spoken.

The Assembly adjourned at 5-15 P. M. to meet again at 11 A. M. on Friday, the 4th March, 1927.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly